

# WORDS CARVED INTO MY HEAD



## **THE DEFINITE MOUTHPIECE INTERVIEW**

**PLUS: PICTURES GALORE, TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF THE OLD SCHOOL, WHAT REMAINS..., SOMETHING MUST BE DONE, REVIEWS**



# WORDS CARVED INTO MY HEAD

A FANZINE DEDICATED TO MOUTHPIECE AND OLD SCHOOL STRAIGHT EDGE HARDCORE

ISSUE # 1

Welcome to the first issue of Words Carved Into My Head Fanzine, we never thought it would be this big... The idea for this zine was spawned during the Onward/Mainstrike '95 tour after an intense 6 hour "tongue in cheek" discussion on old school and Mouthpiece with certain individuals on the bus. The "riots" continued, the idea grew, and after a while we decided to make this a serious project. Hardcore and straight edge play such important roles in our lives, but these days alot of the things we feel is the most important and vital are simply looked down upon. Mouthpiece was

one of the few bands who really tried to keep the spirit of real hardcore alive and together, and was thereby maybe the most important band of the 90s. A lot of shit have been said, and a proper appreciation of their effort is way due. Inside you'll find an interview that is, to us, inspiring to say the least and really expresses some thoughts we have on the hardcore scene of today. There's also two articles that expresses some of our ideas more in-depth. There's Amdams experiment, "What Remains...", somewhere between fiction and prose, and of course pictures,

pictures, pictures. Opinions that appear in Words Carved, all of them, are reflective of the ones held by the editors. So if you have any reactions to it, please let us know. Criticism is healthy. As it looks now, we'll put out another issue in the future, and hold your breath-it will contain quality stuff. This last week, during the h.a.r.d. layout-sessions, we also added a third member here at Words Carved Into My Head: Arne Olav Haabeth.3 is family. OK, stand tall, stand proud, stand hard, bringin' back the spirit of '88...  
Peter, Peter & Arne Aug 10

**THANKS:** Tim McMahon, and the rest of Mouthpiece, Traci Bergman, Erlend Larsen, Stefan Grabowski, Brett Hardware, Eskil Vogt, Dave Mandel, Steve Tension Building, FloorPunch, Espen and Anette, Trond Sættem, all the Mainstrike guys, Jay, Plagued With Rage (RIP), Pat of Fastbreak, Halfmast, Nick Third Party, Spawn, Patrick Kitzel (Go Vegetarian!), Michael Müller (better listen to some old school hardcore!), Daniel, Ollie Andersen, Anne Mette, the Survive Death tour crew, Close Call, Rectify, Contention, Sportswear, Onward, Krishna's Cuisine, BK, Jolt Cola, Coke, The Nike Company, Champion, Fred Perry, Lacoste, Ralph Lauren, Boiling Point, Schism (scripture), Smorgasbord, Open Your Eyes, Youth Of Today, BOLD and the Schism bands...

## PLAYLISTS:

### PRESENT STUFF:

Chain Of Strength 'The One Thing That Still Holds True' LP  
Circle Storm 'Spirit' EP  
Mouthpiece all  
Rectify 'How We Feel' EP+ advance for new EP  
Statue 'Something To Say' EP  
Mainstrike 'Times Still Here' EP  
FloorPunch demo  
Ignite 'Call On My Brothers' LP  
Fastbreak EP  
Halfmast 'Together' EP  
Redemption 87 "About Face"

### OLDER STUFF:

D.Y.S. 'Brotherhood' 12"  
Wide Awake EP  
BOLD 'Speak Out' LP  
Project X EP  
Judge 'New York Crew' EP  
Youth Of Today all  
Faith 'Subject To Change' 12"  
G.I. 'Make An Effort' EP

SS Decontrol 'Kids...' + 'Get It Away' 12"  
Antidote 'Thou Shalt Not Kill' EP  
Gorilla Biscuits all  
Bl'ast! 'Power Of Expression' LP  
Fed\*Up! demo  
Brotherhood 'Words Run...' 12"  
Abusive Action demo  
Pushed Aside demo  
This Is Boston Not LA comp. LP  
Together comp. EP  
Abused 'Loud And Clear' EP  
Release 'The Pain Inside' EP

### POP TUNES FOR THE SUMMER:

Louise 'Naked' LP  
Paul Weller LPs+ 'peacock Suit' EP  
Kylie Minogue 'Where's The Feeling' 12"  
Electronic 'Raise The Pressure' LP  
Small Faces all  
Spice Girls 'Wannabe'  
MonaLisa 'Bailando'  
The Jam 'Peel Sessions' '77  
Oasis 'What's The Story?...' LP  
The Who early stuff  
Ocean Colour Scene 'Moseley Shoals' LP

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**SOMETHING MUST BE  
DONE-  
RIGHT NOW.**

Hardcore has shaped my ideas in a lot of ways. It has put me in the position to do things myself in a positive and a constructive way. The slogan "Do It Yourself" still means a lot to me. As I see it, it means standing up for yourself and be as outspoken about your convictions as possible. I know that a lot of kids can't relate to the slogan, but in my eyes they've lost or missed certain things anyway. I wish kids would study what hardcore in the past was all about. The past is the solid foundation for the future of hardcore. Check out bands like SSD, DYS, Minor Threat, Void, Faith, Iron Cross ("Crucified" is originally by Iron Cross and not AF-Michi, now you know!), Deep Wound, Jerry's Kids, SOA, Untouchables, Artificial Peace, Fix, Necros, Lärm, Indigesti, Ripcord, Heresy, Negazione.

Too many kids in hardcore today are apathetic, complacent and don't help out or contribute to their scene. M.A.D./Lost & Found/Over The Edge amongst others promote this kind of mentality. I wish kids would do more themselves by starting bands, zines, putting up shows and supporting their own local scene. Remember that the Boston/NYC/DC scenes were not created in one day. It took a long time and lots of effort to build a scene with that kind of potential. Make your own scene (strong). Make it fuckin' work.

Another thing... almost every kid seems to be straight edge in the scene today, but no one is willing to speak out about it. I am fuckin' proud to be straight edge and I let people know it. Today there is a lot of moderation concerning straight edge - and I don't like this way of thinking at all. I only have a very few friends that aren't straight edge simply because only a few can respect my attitude towards alcohol and drugs. I want to live my life in full control, if people can't respect me for that I won't hesitate to fight them - be it verbally or physically. My point is that I don't like this mentality that says: "if you drink that's OK- you're an alright guy too". That's not the way I see straight edge. When I found the edge back in '88 I got a lot of shit for it. I had to fight for my beliefs. That's why I X up, to separate myself from the weak minds with whom I have nothing in common. Kids today are apathetic and complacent... as I said above... what are you really fighting for? You'd better get some goals..., damnit.

I know that I will continue to keep hardcore and straight edge alive. I'll never settle down, I'll never moderate my beliefs and I'll never compromise and I'll never give in to your complacency. We started this fanzine up to bring back the spirit... we just might have to *take it back!* Better watch out.

Peter Hoeren (spring 1996)



## TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

*I remember all the things that you said.*  
Ray Capps.



As the recurrent theme of this fanzine is "old school hardcore" I thought it necessary to elaborate on the term and our use of it. Firstly, I want to limit this discussion to the hardcore scene, and even more specific, the "straight edge related" hardcore scene, and this is, as you should have noticed by now, the scope of this zine. Not punk, skate, metal, hip hop or any thing like that. Besides, what interests me is after all the straight edge, that's hardcore to me.

So who's talking about "schools"? There's some implications by this word. First, there's the obvious, but hidden, allusion to education, learning. "We come here to learn" - Hard Stance. Then there's connotation to continuity, and graduation, a specific line, department, "he graduated from the old school". So by "school" one learns, but one also learns to teach away, to pass on, the knowledge or the art. Here I am approaching the central argument of WCIMH fanzine. The Old School of hardcore is a line of hardcore, a specific strand of hardcore, that may run over periods of time. A strand of hardcore that in some way share a common curriculum, ideas, and style (the school uniform, the emblem, the motto). With some sort of shared legacy that lives on, even though the school has to relocate to new buildings etc. This means that it is

possible to be "old school" or to be into it, or to play old school hardcore in 1996. The temporality of the term is not one designating a specific reified has-been, historic relic, or dead past that can never again be evoked. The temporality of the term designates the tradition or strand of hardcore that one can trace, albeit in a barren, stuttering (like a broken record, indeed), discontinuous way to a past gone *and* still to come. This means that the distinction between "new breed" and "new school" should be clearly marked. "New breed", the word *breed* implies re-creation, re-invention, re-enforcement, re-discovery, a re-petition. Also remembrance? And indeed family. While "new school" in this case is more a break, re-definition, a new line of ideas, style and curriculums. In the case of this fanzine then i. e. Mouthpiece will be an old school band, even though they were not around in Boston '82 or whatever, because Mouthpiece then represents a new breed, a new point in the line, a "dotted line", of hardcore that we'd like to think of as "old school".

Having now sketched out the temporality of the term "old school" it's *time* to say something about it in a more concrete fashion. As I said above the *tracing* of the old school is not always a dynamic, symmetric enterprise. But in short one could talk of to



periods when it peaked so to speak. The first will naturally be around '81- '82, with bands like SSD, DYS, Impact Unit, Negative Fx in Boston and their DC counterparts like Minor Threat, Void, Faith, Double- O and so on. Although these bands differ in many aspects and not all of them were "straight edge bands" a certain kind style evolved, a defining and sharpening of a certain hardcore sound, attitude, packaging and image (and image is not meant derogatory or negative here). Fast, hard, driving music, a no- nonsense, straight forward and solid hardcore, power and energy. Rather a simple crunch than rockish post-punk. I am not writing a history of hardcore here, and my aim is coming to terms with the old school concept rather than giving an historical account. Anyways, in my opinion, the two records that epitomize this spirit is SSDs "Get It Away" and "Brotherhood" by DYS. Also in the wake of this, there was Negative Approach and NYC bands like Abused, Cause For Alarm and Antidote. A lot of hardcore bands were of course around at this time, but there is some kind of bond that links all these bands together perhaps in an obscure way. If this link is something imposed on them in aposteriority does not weaken my theory, rather vice versa.

However, as I said earlier on, this line of hardcore is one of discontinuity, and at Jerry's Kids farewell show in Boston 12-15-84 Springa (that's of SSD, if one of you Snapcase fans didn't know) declares hardcore dead. A man that really set out to revive it was Ray Cappel. With Youth of Today the school I'm trying to define here is becoming more defined, developed, and a certain aesthetic, and ethics, is becoming apparent. Now alot of you will say that Youth of Today was then new school, but this is not what they did think themselves or what Youth of Today got described as. In *Thrasher magazine* november 1987 Mike Gitter interviews Youth of Today and I hope you excuse me for quoting rather large parts of it :

"So Ray," I [Mike Gitter] ask, "what exactly do you say to people who claim that Youth of Today is doing absolutely nothing except rehashing their hardcore influences?"

"No one else is doing solid hardcore anymore. When we started the band we were upset because we love hardcore and we played it true and sang lyrics straight from the heart. The kids loved it, and now it seems like *hardcore's in a rebirth*. It's stronger than ever and definitely something new, not at all a rehash. We play 1987 hardcore which is different from 1982 hardcore, but, *still, it's hardcore*. [my emphasis]

I guess this speaks for itself. With Youth of Today a whole scene across the US prospered and also later Europe. And '87- '88 is a golden age of this style. And here's an important point, it was not just music. It was an attitude, a heightened emphasis on straight edge, a certain style of packaging, owing much to the SSD artwork (by the way, check out the new Mouthpiece 7" and shirts), big, bold (pun intended) logos, singalong pictures, pointing fingers, pile- ons, X's etc etc. Even a dress code, the Youth Crew style, trainers, clean shorts, Champion hoods, even Fred Perrys, and Vans as seen worn by Ian MacKaye or Nikes as seen worn by Al SSD on "Get It Away". There's alot of links towards the early days, it was a revival, and a re- definition, sharpening. Even band took their names from old songs, the "Youth" in Youth of Today, Brotherhood, Circle Storm and so on. And musicwise, I guess you know what I am talking about, pure, "generic" hardcore, songs... verse- chorus- verse- chorus mosh etc. singalongs, go!s, simple riffs full of energy. And also note that this was a rebellion against the takeover of metal core and rock, a situation analogous to that of today. This was the 2nd generation of solid hardcore, no doubt. And if we want to draw parallels up to today Mouthpiece and the like will be a "3rd generation". Porcell says in *Jersey Beat* fanzine no. 37 (in an interview conducted by Tony Rettman, who fate has it also wrote the Mouthpiece article for *Thrasher*) and again, I will quote *in extenso*:

I can see it as a second generation ... like back when when me and Ray got into the scene, we loved Minor Threat. We loved SSD, we loved DYS, we loved all of them, then all of a sudden, around 1984 it seemed like it died out. All the good bands totally died out, then there was this big surge of crossover stuff, and we looked around and the music we loved totally turned to shit. Like, COC were the biggest band in the country, and me and Ray were like, "Fuck that! We want to start an inspiring band!"

Isn't "crossover" "new school hardcore" today, couldn't COC be Snapcase, couldn't SSD, DYS, Minor Threat be Youth of Today, Chain of Strength and Bold? This metal hardcore back in '87, is it really so far away from the metal hardcore today? History has its strange ways of repeating itself. Also the grungey emo hardcore had its equivalent, "What we're doing is better than *going soft* or turning metal." (Richie YOT, *Thrasher* nov. 87 p. 96, emphasis added)

Even though the wornout MRR rhetoric tried to make all bands sound like carbon copies of YOT, there was differences, that's a part of the old school, but if you put it



together, the package, the overall picture, audible and visible links these bands together. Bands like Hard Stance and Wide Awake are different, Chain of Strength and Against The Wall, Youth Of Today or Release, but there is something that links them together, and this something, impossible to point down, is what we're looking for here, and finally also what Mouthpiece was out to *resurrect*, and this makes it possible also to speak of old school in 1996. The term "old school" is an after-the-fact term so to speak, obviously SSD did not call themselves old school hardcore, but after their split up it was possible to identify their style of hardcore as "old school". This possibility of identifying is of importance here, it means that are you given the possibility to identify it. The possibility. The skill, the learning, you can have the possibility to perform your acquired skill or learning. Once again this leads us back to the more literal meaning of the the word school in old school, to learn one has to read, but also, to *remember*, and in order to memorize; one has to write. To sign the "dotted line". This writing may be bracketed, interrupted, and ridiculed, but it is nevertheless an imperative, and this allows for an understanding of old school straight edge hardcore that is not based on banal historicism that wants to deal with something dead and gone, and reduced to MRRs derogatory and simplifying criticism of straight edge hardcore. The strand of good solid hardcore may be broken and molested, but it will always live on. Even though when it comes back, it may only haunt you as a ghost.

Peter Amdam(spring 1996)



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# mouthpieces

NOTHING'S CHANGED IN ME...



This interview was conducted through the mail with Tim McMahon, in february 1996. The answers were written down by him on february 22 and 23, Tim had the the sincerity and commitment to answer the interview the same day as he got my questions in the mail, something that makes me feel bad about taking ages to put this thing out. Again I want to sincerely thank him for his effort and kind spirit. I hope this interview will be one of the best Mouthpiece interviews you've ever read and that it comes across as inspiring to you as it does to me.

Peter Amdam

Mouthpiece. We felt that Control was a generic run of the mill name, that's why we changed it. Once Mouthpiece started in 1990, we became a serious band that tried to set goals for ourselves. We got rid of our guitarist Pat because he wasn't really into the whole straight edge thing, he didn't like "labeling himself". When Pat left we replaced him with this kid Dan Hornacker who played in Ressurrection. Dan was in Mouthpiece for about a year

Instead of trying to be slow and heavy we wanted to play fast and energetic hardcore with a straight edge in your face attitude.

and then he quit. Dan is still straight edge, he just wasn't into doing the band at that time. We then replaced Dan with Pete R., at that time we had Pete R. on guitar, Pete M. on guitar, Chris on bass, Jason on drums and Tim-vocals. Pete M. left because he no longer had time to play music, so we then replaced him with Scott from Lifetime. Scott played with us for a few months, then we kicked him out. Scott just wasn't dedicated. At this time we underwent a big change; Chris, our bassplayer decided to play guitar along with Pete R. And we got a new bassist named Dave who played for Flagman. We had this line-up for a couple of years and it seemed to be one of the best, but after a while, Dave decided that being straight edge wasn't for him. We kicked Dave out, got Sean to play bass and around the same time, Pete R. left the band to move to Boston. We then got Matt to take Pete's place. The final Mouthpiece line up was Matt- guitar, Chris-guitar, Sean- bass, Jason-drums, Tim- vocals. To this day only the past and present members who are still straight edge and still into hardcore are;

Tim, Matt, Sean, Jason, Chris, and Dan.

Would it be fair to say that you're trying with this band to bring back or carry on a certain hardcore spirit?

When Mouthpiece first started we weren't trying to really bring anything back. We started at a time when most of the old bands were still around, we just wanted to play straight edge hardcore. What happened was all of the old bands either broke up or lost their edge shortly after we got together. We wanted to keep the feeling, the music, the style, the energy, and the spirit alive. At a time when the straight edge scene was nearly no more and hardcore shows were happening less and less, Mouthpiece came out playing full on straight edge hardcore. Instead of trying to be slow and heavy we wanted to play fast and energetic hardcore with a straight edge in your face attitude. We wanted packed up front crowds, stage diving, finger pointing singalongs. We wanted the hardcore scene to be what it was when we first got into it. We didn't set out to bring it back when we first started, but that's what it turned into.

To be more specific, in an early interview in *Indecision* you talked about being a mouthpiece for "what's going down the drain". What was going "down the drain" and how successful do you think Mouthpiece has been as a "spokesperson" and representative for this?

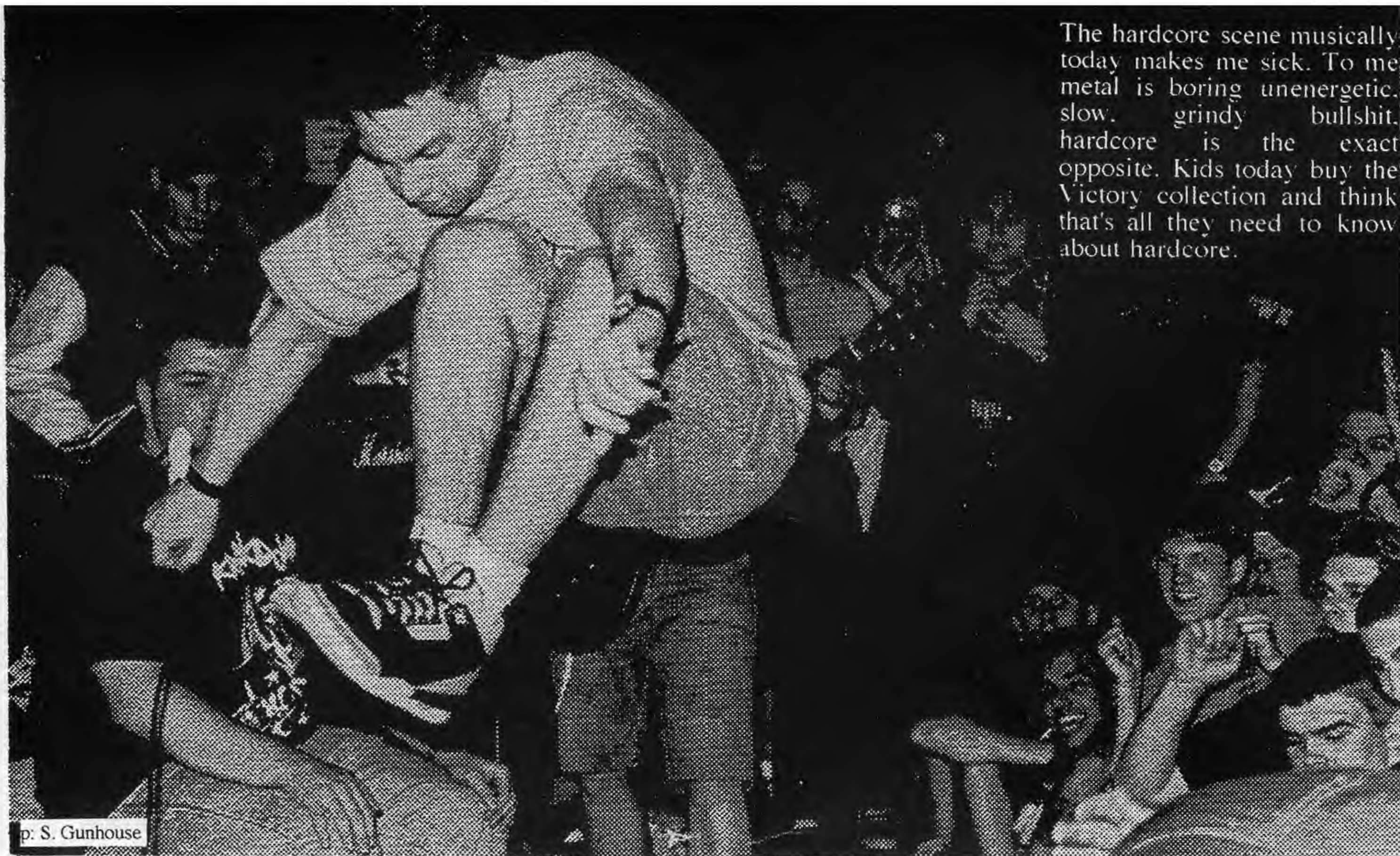
I wanted to bring things back into the light that seemed to be getting forgotten. Kids were losing their edge and thinking they were cool because of it. I wanted to say that I still care and nothing has changed in me. There was very little unity, very few shows and there were basically very few bands.

Tell me about Control. Did Mouthpiece evolve from that band?

Control was a band that Jason, Chris, Pete, Pat and myself, started in 1989. It was basically the same as Mouthpiece, just different songs. Jason and I wanted to do a straight edge hardcore band, so we found members and did Control. Shortly after Control started, Pete left the band due to conflicts with an other member. Control played about three or four shows, then we decided to write all new songs and change our name to







by S. Gunhouse

The hardcore scene musically today makes me sick. To me metal is boring unenergetic, slow, grindy bullshit, hardcore is the exact opposite. Kids today buy the Victory collection and think that's all they need to know about hardcore.

After we had been together for about a year, kids started to catch on. More and more kids were coming to shows with Xs on their hands, more bands were starting, shows were happening pretty frequently, things seemed to be changing for the better. I'd like to think that we had a lot to do with the positive changes going on within our scene, but we weren't doing it alone. There were other kids that cared and possibly because of our growing popularity, becoming more vocal about changing the scene positively. I feel like our work paid off, but at the same time, we didn't really bring back what we had, we made something new out of what we had left over. The scene will probably never be the same to me as it was eight or nine years ago, it may get better, it may get worse, I know I'll continue to do my part to keep the feeling I hold inside alive.

**What do you think about the fact that almost no one is playing fast driving hardcore anymore, the dominance of metal and emo/grunge? Do you see it change again?**

The hardcore scene musically today, makes me sick. I can honestly say I like only a small handful of bands around today. Metal is not hardcore and kids today see no difference. Today kids seem to be so caught up in what's in the music lyrically than what the music sounds like. I don't hate metal, I just hate the fact that kids can't see the difference between metal and hardcore. To me metal is boring, unenergetic, slow, grindy bullshit, hardcore is the exact opposite. Bands like Slayer are great, but when I go to a hardcore show I want to dance, dive, singalong and just have fun. These metal hardcore bands seem so uninspiring and boring that all I tend to want to do when I see them is sit and watch. Some metalish

hardcore bands can pull it off and move me, but overall I can't stand it. Kids today seem only to care about what's going on today and would rather forget about what happened in the past. I remember when I got into hardcore ten years ago, all I wanted to do was to study what hardcore was all about. I bought new zines, old zines, new records, old records, I talked to kids that were into it before me, I wanted to know everything about what was taking over my life. Kids today buy the Victory collection and think that's all they need to know about hardcore, I have nothing against new kids in the scene, it's the ones that say fuck yesterday, today is where it's at. I believe that if you don't know your past then how can you build a solid future. Even though there seems to be more metal bands and metal hardcore kids, there are some real hardcore kids left and some real hardcore kids just getting into the hardcore scene. I might go



as far as to say that there are a few really good new hardcore bands around today that give me a feeling of hope and inspiration. We'll have to see what the future has in store for us. Our new seven inch has songs that reflect everything I'm talking about. Hardcore could completely change for the worse, but I won't give up, I'll do what I can to keep hardcore what I believe it should be.

What bands would you say influence Mouthpiece's sound? And what bands would you like to compare Mouthpiece with?

As far as influencing our sound, it's no surprise that I'll credit that to Chain of Strength. When we first started writing Mouthpiece songs, we based our formula on the first Chain of Strength seven inch, fast, powerful, simple and inspirational. We didn't try to copy their songs, just follow the same song writing formula. Other than Chain, bands like Youth of Today, Judge, Gorilla Biscuits, No For An Answer, Bold, Insted and bands in that vein inspired us and our sound. Our newest seven inch "Face Tomorrow", shows our influences from bands like Dag Nasty and Bl'ast!, that we haven't really exposed before. It's not that we haven't always liked those bands, but now it comes out in our newer music.

Are you doing any covers besides "Straight Edge Revenge" and "Open



p. T. Bergman

Up"? Why do you cover these two songs? Does anyone still care about DYS and Project X?

Once in a while we'll do "True Till Death" by Chain or "Together" by Youth of Today, we also did "Blood Stains" by Agent Orange a couple of times. As for "Open Up" and "SXE Revenge", we play those songs when people ask for them. We started doing "SXE Revenge" when we first started, kids knew we did it and often asked us to play it. We did "Open Up" because DYS was a great band and "Open Up" is a cool song, it's just that simple. Most kids do care when we play "SXE Revenge" and some care when we play "Open Up", but a lot of kids seemed to learn "Open Up" from us recording it for our record. I guess in a way by us covering these old songs, it helps new kids become familiar and interested in the bands that originally played those songs.

In relation to the last question, do you think that you are indulging in an unhealthy appreciation

of the past and are propagating a turn away from the politically more urgent themes in hardcore today as certain critics will have it?

Indulging in an unhealthy appreciation of the past? That's ridiculous, if it wasn't for the past, we would have nothing that we have today, you take of what you've learned from the past and try to mold a better future. It's not my fault that all of my favorite bands existed 10 years ago. As far as I'm concerned, bands haven't been playing hardcore as well as they did in the past. If you can't appreciate the new bands, there's always tons of old bands. Some people may believe that that I'm just worshipping the past, but I honestly don't give two shits what people think if they're going to make statements like that. As for the importance of political issues that I ignore with my lyrics, I write about what I feel is important to me and what directly affects myself, I'm not going to write about the government and my



p. Hartsfield

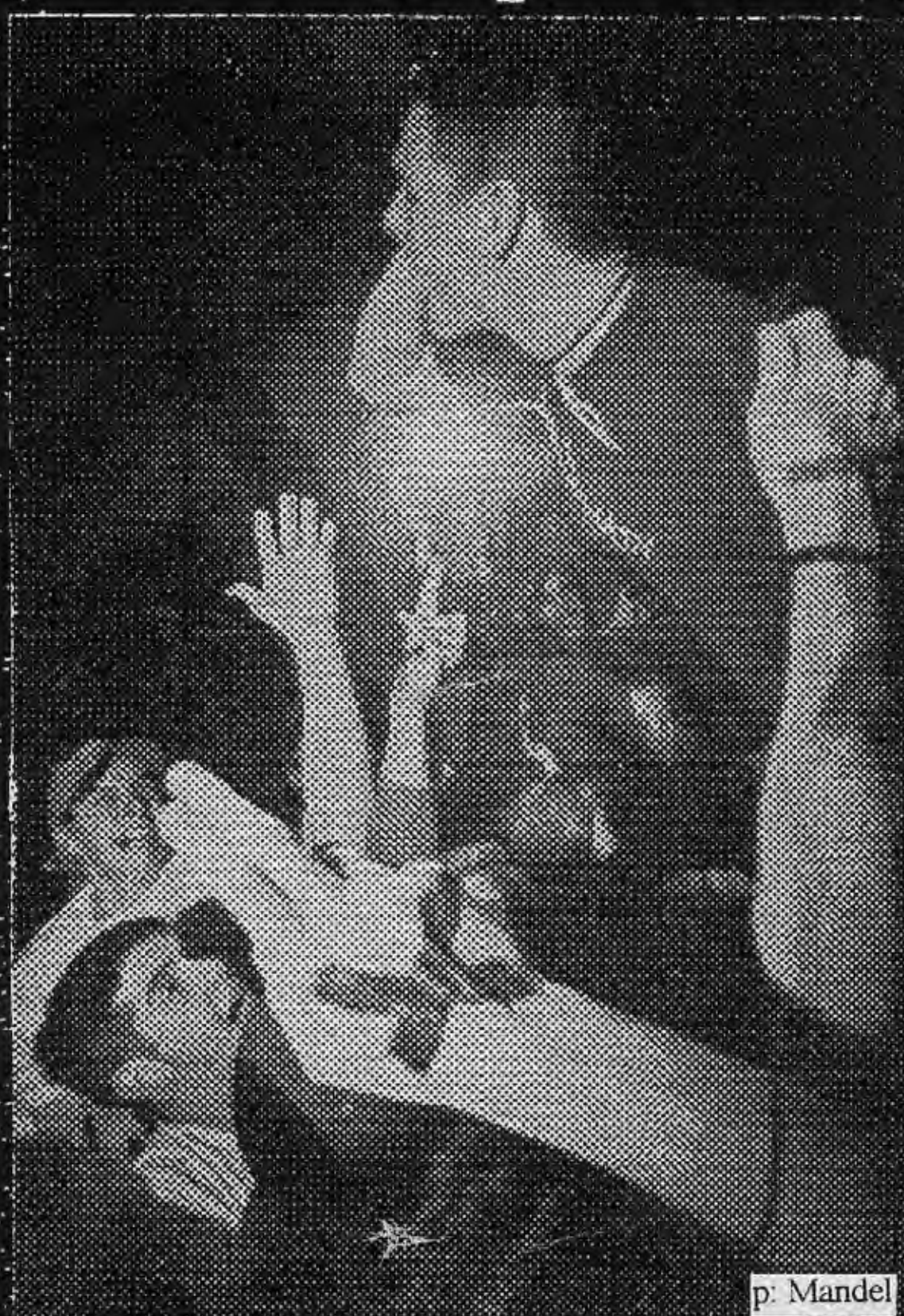


country's political problems because some 14 year old shit head thinks I should. I'll leave that to bands that want to sing about that kind of stuff. If somebody wants to critique the importance of my lyrics, they should do it to somebody else because I'm not going to change what I write about for anybody.

I know you're a big fan of Youth of Today... have you seen them live and what Youth of Today songs that inspire you the most?

As hard as it is to say this, I've never seen Youth Of Today, unless you want to count their reunion show they played in Trenton, NJ with Sick Of It All at City Gardens in 1994. It's not that I wasn't around when they were playing, it's just that I was young and had no friends that drove. YOT played shows fairly close to me, but I had no way of getting to see them. I was just too young to go where ever I wanted when ever I wanted... I did get to see a lot of great bands, but unfortunately YOT was not one of them. I had one chance to see YOT, but my ride that agreed to take me, never showed up. I waited at my front door for hours, but my ride was a DJ at the club they played and had been running late, so he left without picking me up. I saw YOT do a 6 song reunion show and it was probably one of the coolest things I have ever experienced, it only left me wanting more and feeling depressed that I'd probably never see a band that good again. As far as I'm concerned, YOT is the best band that ever existed. They did so much for the straight edge hardcore scene and took so much shit. They are an influential band to say the least. If I had to narrow it down, my favorite songs from YOT would have to be "Flame Still Burns", "We Just Might", "Stabbed In The Back", "Make A Change" and "Together".

# mouthpiece



p: Mandel

## FACE TOMORROW

In an interview in Anti-Matter you got somewhat reproached for using straight edge "clichés" in interviews etc. It's this a criticism that is common, does criticism of this kind bother you? It seems you haven't stopped using them, what will be your defense for still saying things like "True Till Death", "Holding On Strong" etc?

I have gotten some slack for using the so called "straight edge clichés", but it hasn't been anything serious. I use these clichés because I've been hearing them so long and they just get stuck in my head.. All they really are is cool phrases that sum how I feel. I realize that they have been used forever, but I'm not trying to be clever or original when I say "True Till Death". It's just a simple way to express how you feel.

Reports and rumours have it that Mouthpiece has been slagged off by parts of the militant "Vegan Edge" scene, and particularly the Syracuse vegan edge. Is this true, does there exist some hostility? I've also heard that the song "What Was Said" partly refers to this?

I have had letters written to me, kids confronting me and rumours started about me through all of this "Vegan Edge" bullshit. I have nothing against vegans, after all I am a vegetarian and have been for the past five years. I completely support animal rights and the education of people about the harmful effects meat can have on the body. What I don't support is making threats and violent actions to scare and intimidate non-vegans/vegetarians into becoming educated. I consider education the answer, not violence and



p (this side and opposite): Traci B.



intimidation. Some vegan kids say that I don't know what Hardline is about and shouldn't make statements about stuff I know nothing about. I feel as if I have read enough about Hardline to judge it and talk down on it. I have had a kid write me letters saying I was an evil devil because I wore sneakers that had leather on them. The kid said that when the vegan revolution came, I would be taken out. Bullshit like that isn't going to change anything, only push people further away from what you're trying to accomplish. As far as any direct confrontations, the only one I had was in Syracuse, NY. The kid that confronted me wasn't from Syracuse, but he wanted to tell me that "What Was Said" was a stupid song and that I knew nothing about Hardline. We sort of talked things out, but who knows what that kid went on and told his friends or put in fanzines. I don't care, I know where I stand and that's all I need to know.

**How do you feel about the fact that a zine like this is being done?**

I feel flattered, it's not every day that someone dedicates a fanzine to Mouthpiece. It's nice to see someone that appreciates what we are trying to do and not just criticising. I've tried so hard to accomplish things with this band and it seems like most kids don't respect what I'm saying. For someone to stand in our defense, it just feels really good.

**Name your all time favourite 7" and favourite 12".**

Favorite seven inch would have to be Chain Of Strength "True Till Death", favorite LP would undoubtedly have to be Youth Of Today "We're Not In This Alone". Those two records are documentation of my life. Every song on those records is so powerful and inspiring, I can't say enough good things about those records.

**Do you consider Mouthpiece to be an "old school" band? What's your definition of old school straight edge hardcore?**

This is a really hard thing to say. I'd probably say that we're not necessarily old school as a band because we've only been around for 6 years. To some kids we could be considered old school, but for me who has been into hardcore for about 10 years, Mouthpiece is not old school. We do play hardcore that could be considered old school style, but we're a band that started in the 90s, how old school is anything of the 90s? We are old school in our music, influences, style, and most of the members have been involved in hardcore for a long time, but as a band we're some where between old school and new school. We're middle school hardcore perhaps. For me old school hardcore is 1980 through 1985, bands like Minor Threat, The Faith, SSD, Last Rights, DYS, Negative Approach, Black Flag and The Bad Brains are old school hardcore. Youth Of Today, Bold, Insted, bands like that were around when I was just getting into hardcore, therefore I never really looked at them as old school. Old school were the bands that started it all, they were the pioneers of hardcore. I guess it depends on when you got into hardcore and what your personal interpretation of old school is.





far there have been no colored vinyl. Look for limited edition colored vinyl for the LP in the future. Face Tomorrow seven inch: there are 500 limited edition clear vinyl 1995 summer tour pressings. Each tour pressing has hand stamped labels that say "Mouthpiece summer tour '95 XXX" and they also have a New Age Records stamp on the other side. The first 50 tour pressings that we sold had the "Face Tomorrow" title centered under the front cover photo, the rest had "Face Tomorrow" title plush with the left side. There are also 50 that New Age kept exclusively for mail order, these records have a different stamp on them that says "Increase the grease". We designed and copied all of the covers and lyric sheets for all 500 copies of that tour pressing.

Any last words you want to "carve into our heads"?

I want to sincerely thank Peter Amdam and Peter Hoeren for doing this fanzine and supporting Mouthpiece with such an enthusiasm. Your support means more to me than you could ever know. I want to thank all the kids that have bought our records and gone to our shows over the past six years. I think this interview will give everyone who didn't know what Mouthpiece was about a clear representation and to those who did know what we were about, this is just another way to let you know where I'm coming from. Everyone please keep all eyes and ears open for news on my new band you'll be hearing a lot about us in due time. For those who will continue to doubt my sincerity and talk their shit, we'll see who's still there in the end. Thank you and good night.

...Tim XXX

# mouthpiece



superstitch face valve mouthpiece integrity  
walls falling endpoint conviction reveal

2:00pm

saturday april 4th middlesex county college \$7  
for info or directions call (908) 846-7562

NEW AGE RECORDS PRESENTS

OUTSPOKEN  
A CHORUS OF DISAPPROVAL  
from New Jersey  
MOUTHPIECE  
STRIFE  
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RESSURECTION

THURSDAY DECEMBER 20th AT THE ROCK TOWN THE VINO DON'T BLVD  
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TICKETMASTER. DON'T MISS THIS ONE. BE THERE EARLY.

sunday april 28, 1991 2:00pm  
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HARDCORE 91

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655

CRACK  
Same game  
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mouthpiece  
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record release show!!

Friday, NOV. 8th 6:00pm  
middlesex county college  
washed and cut - 10:00pm - 10:00pm  
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all ages, no drugs, booze, or piercings  
(if you can't breathe through your nose, stay home!)

SAT JUNE 15TH  
BURN  
TURNING POINT  
NO ESCAPE  
MOUTHPIECE

8:00 STARTS AT 8:00 PM START OF THE  
REVIVAL

3RD ST. PHILLY PA. CALL 609-598-0574 FOR INFO  
TURNING POINT NO ESCAPE SEPT 7-OUT-5000

SATURDAY APRIL 17TH 2:00PM

\$7.00

ENDPOINT  
4 WALLS  
FALLING  
OUTSPOKEN  
mouthpiece  
RESSURECTION  
Strife  
flagman GRIP  
ASHES

MIDDLESEX COUNTY COLLEGE  
COLLEGE CENTER  
EDISON, NJ

INFO/DIRECTIONS: (908) 846-7562

BOLD

mouthpiece  
crud is a cult  
bleed  
hose got cable  
sunday august 14, 1994

american legion hall doors open at 1:30. first band at 2:00  
for \$4 with a can of food info rich @ 609-591-8818 or mike @  
609-298-6670 brought to you by

DOWN NOT OUT

Tuesday, June 26th (6:00PM) - A benefit HC show for Women's Crisis Services  
at St. Paul's Church, Princeton NJ (214 N. Main St.) - \$5 Donation. All Ages  
Free Veggies food served - NO Smokes/Alcohol/Kickassers  
General directions sit back, for more info call Alfredo @ 609-734-9084  
for more detailed directions call Alex 609-497-1217 / Ravi @ 609-483-1895

ENDPOINT  
shift  
bleed

"The return of"  
mouthpiece  
Falling Foward  
A Nation In Transit



**MOUTHPIECE 1990-96**  
**WE'LL NEVER FORGET**



FANZINES reviewed by Peter Hoeren

## Against the Stream # 1

This used to be called Unity, it was and it still is a promotion magazine for Lost& Found Records and M. A. D. if you ask me. Hardcore is more than buying the Lost& Found collection. Not much potential here, most of the interviews almost bored me to death. It comes with a comp. CD which includes the Mouthpiece song Left of You that is same as the one on their latest 7" on New Age. (Rainer Knabben, Pütt 12, 42781 Haan, Germany)

## Over the Edge # 4

Like Against the Stream this is boring. The interviews are not in depth. This issue features; Misfits, Snapcase, Roger Miret, Tree, Dead Stool Pigeon. There's not much to say except that they don't really know what hardcore is about. Thumbs down. (Mad Marc, Hagelbergerstr. 48, 10965 Berlin, Germany)

## Hardware # 7

Finally, a 'zine that I like. Nice layouts, plenty of columns, letters record/zine reviews, show reviews, scene reports from all over the world, great pictures and well done interviews make this zine rule. This issue contains; Cro Mags, Leeway and Sick of it All. 64 pages full on reading. It's all there. One of the best zines ever. A hard working effort. (David Koenig, 216 W. Munsell Ave, Linden, NJ 07036- 4426, USA)

## Rectify "How We Feel" 7"

Finally I am starting to feel proud of the norwegian hardcore scene again. Rectify's debut is definitely a sign that says the tide is turning. This was originally intended only as a demo, but Crucial Response liked the recordings so much that they wanted it on vinyl straightaway. Even though this is a young and new band they dish out some solid hardcore and proves that they rather listen to Bold and YOT than any of those metal bands kids eat up these days. 4 songs, all of them in a Chain/Mouthpiece vein of hardcore even though a bit faster and rougher. Fast, viscious, and with and intense and simple song structure. Check out the brutal Youth Crew back ups, especially Our Virtues' pile- on friendly "Free from poison" chant. The songs are short and ends before you really notice it, like the early Outspoken songs. Inspiring and to the point lyrics, first and foremost about straight edge, whereas the last song is a somewhat more enigmatic Triumph(not the bike!). The sound quality could have been better, but it's still alot better than the Third Party records and it's bassy enough. Good work guys. (Crucial Response Records)

Peter Amdam

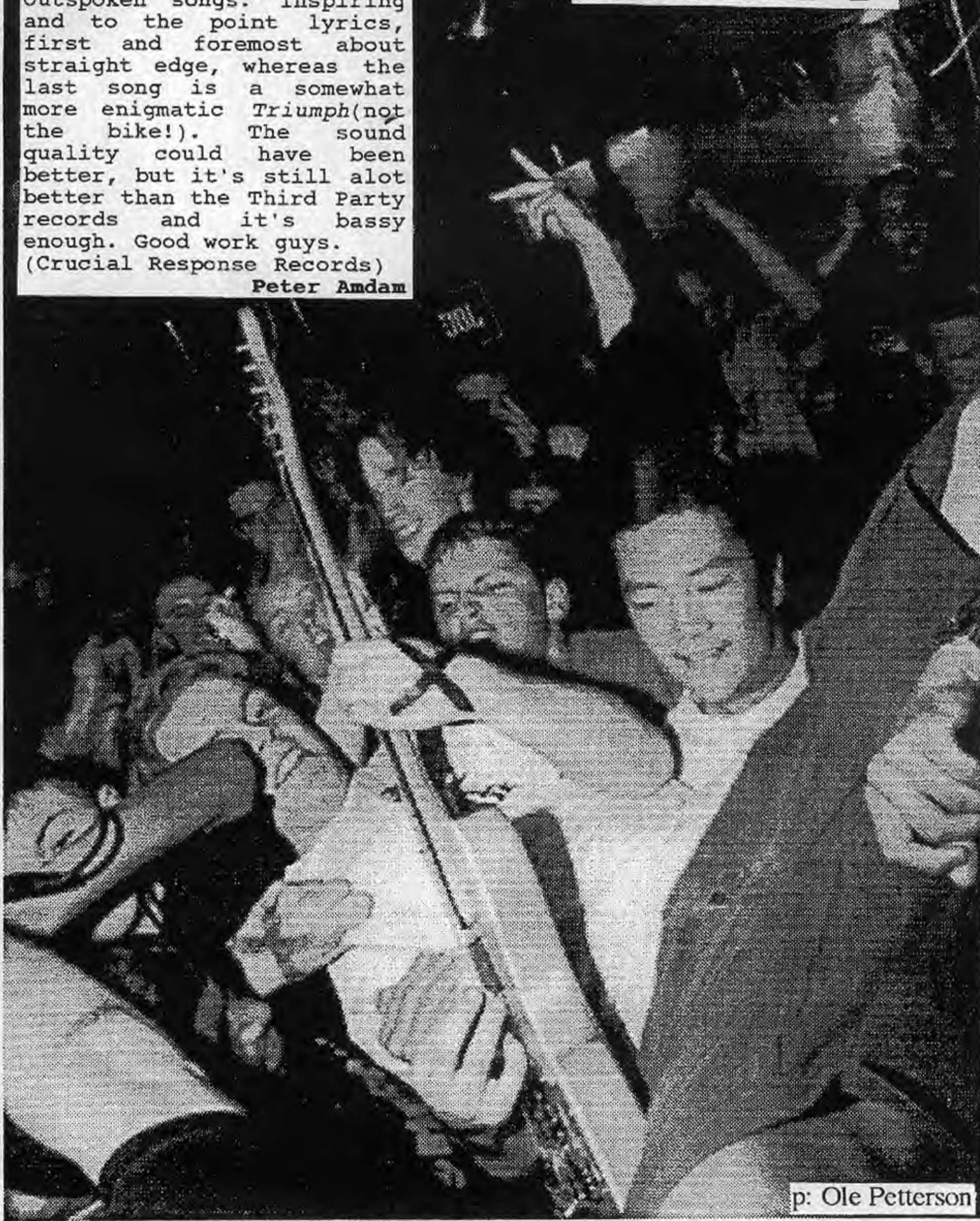
## Rectify new 7"ep

Thought we'd sneak in a preview of the new Rectify record in the last minute here as it is just recorded. And as expected, Rectify delivers solid hardcore, fast, furious and clean cut. The Chain influence is still very present, especially on the first song which has an opening similar to Chain's Impact. Aside from that you can clearly hear Bold and Side By Sides influence on Espens songwriting and Kims pounding. This time, the recordings are even better and possesses an intensity that is hard to match. All the lyrics has a "stabbed in the back" theme to it, which is quite uncanny as this band seems to be history now. They will be sadly missed, one of the best bands out of Europe, ever.

(Crucial Response Records)

Peter Amdam

# RECTIFY



p: Ole Petterson

# D.Y.S

# XXX AL



### Floorpunch "Goal Line Stand" demo

While the new breed of old style sounding bands around Third Party Records tend to suffer from bad production and sloppy recordings Floorpunch is a band that has got it right. The musicianship is tight as hell, the production is clean and powerful and it's maybe the closest thing to a proper '88 release I've heard in ages. From the imagery on cover and ads (Xs, Champion hoods, Nike) to the music and lyrics this is pure Youth Crew style hardcore. The obvious points of reference is the Judge 7" and Break Down The Walls period YOT, Floorpunch also covers Thinking Straight live and it fits perfectly their style of hardcore. Somehow, don't ask me why, I also keep thinking about the old Powerhouse demo when I listen to this.

This demo is complete with an awesome intro in the best(bust!) New Jersey style- Release, Enuf - and speaking of Release- Chris Zusi's on guitar, and their name... you know(check out the first Release 7" if you don't). Lyricwise this is full of golden moments and the back-ups simply rules(check out the "Go!"s). This one is on the top of my play-list and this band deserves to get alot bigger. But I guess alot of "innovative" and "clever" minds out there will try to prevent that. They're recording a 7" for In My Blood now and it should be the single of the year. This rules. A pumping floorpacker. (In My Blood Records, c/o Brett Beach, 467 Valley St., Apt. 7D, Maplewood, NJ 07040, USA)

Peter Amdam

IN MY BLOOD RECORDS

# FLOORPUNCH

### Straight Edge As Fuck part II comp. CD

Has Desperate Fight Records gone insane? Do they have some mad obsession to put out bad records? Wow, Desperate Fight has been going downhill for a while now and with this release it just picks up speed. A lousy cover, boring bands, only Refused and Seperation manage to hold my attention in a way. Final Exit is trying to do old school hardcore but it is without any spirit. C'mon, do you really think people will you serious with lyrics like "sing along"?! All the other bands are not even worth mentioning. Someone should stop Desperate Fight before it's too late. (Desperate Fight Records, Remigränd 1, 907 31 Umeå, Sweden.)

Peter Hoeren

### Plagued With Rage "I Won't Forget" 7"

Let me tell ya, I'm definitely regaining some faith in the New York state scene here, because here is another awesome band from this area. Forget about Quicksand, this is real hardcore with plenty of Chain and YOT influences. The lyrics deal with straight edge and commitment to the scene. This 7" is soon to be a classic in SEHC. Pick this one up and dance hard to it! (Third Party Records, 21 Nancy Ln., Amherst, NY 14228)

Peter Hoeren

### Records That Words Carved Won't Give A Chance:

New Records by:  
Doughnuts, Merauder, Liar, Turmoil, Bloodlet, Into Another, Ryker's, Approach To Concrete, Monster X, Metroschifter

### Halfmast "Together" 7"

This is the third release of Third Party and no let down at all. A breath of fresh air out of NY state. Well-intentioned lyrics-friendship, unity and positive outlook- team up with hardhitting and danceable music. They got slagged off by MRR and HeartAttack, so diehard fans of classic SEHC should take note. Watch out for the Fastbreak 7" on this label too, it's supposed to be another great release. (Third Party Records, 21 Nancy Ln., Amherst, NY 14228)

Peter Hoeren

CHAIN p: Mandel



# MOUTHPIECE

## straight edge

Here is the complete discography of Mouthpiece reviewed. There is a last song by Mouthpiece recorded, it will come out on a Profile hardcore compilation LP featuring the bigger hardcore bands of the nineties. All the titles reviewed here is available from New Age, except for the Consequence sampler. Enjoy and try to make your collection a little bit more complete.

### MOUTHPIECE "Face Tomorrow" 7"ep

Finally, here it is. The most awaited 7" last year, to me at least. And it is no let down. Mouthpiece proves once again that they still are probably the best hardcore band around these days. After their lp, one of the most important, if not the single most important, hardcore album of the nineties, Mouthpiece continues their crusade, carrying on the torch that seemed to die out around 1990. This means that Mouthpiece delivers hardcore that links up to the glorious tradition of bands like Youth of Today, Wide Awake, Chain of Strength, and so on. And in a time when most "hardcore" records (like the Mean Season, Snapcase, etc) leaves you empty, almost with a "is this what has been the most important thing the last 8 years of my life?" feeling, Mouthpiece's record makes you want to run around, point fingers, yell "go!" and stage dive in your own living room. Hard and aggressive, fast and driving, pure hardcore with a message. No slow rock, no sad attempts at metal. It has 4 songs. The first one, With this regret, starts off with an opening very similar to DYS' classic No Pain No Gain as a hidden point of reference. The song continues its monumental yet minimal journey in a slower True Till Death fashion. A simple repetitive structure that builds up to the two fast riffs where singer Tim

McMahons screaming carries the songs intensity, his clean cut voice is not overplaying it. Thereby keeping it away from farse and "Ebullition land". The last words- "then I rebuild"- links up in a strange enjambic way to the next song; title track Face Tomorrow. "I won't sit back and play the role, I won't accept what it has become"- you know that they're really out to rebuild what is "going down the drain" to quote from an early Mouthpiece interview. Face Tomorrow is probably Mouthpiece's strongest song to date, with its trade mark fast beat and machinelike precision. The excellent moshpart enacts the whole message of the song. This is catchy as hell, energetic and perfect for those pile-on sing alongs. It's a defense of good, classic hardcore the way it was supposed to be - "you can change the sound/ but you can't touch what's in my heart". The lyrics says it, the music does it.

The first song on the flipside though, Cinder, doesn't quite live up to the standard that Face Tomorrow sets. Anyways, it's showing some of Mouthpieces other influences such as early Bl'ast! and Dag Nasty. It's a slower more melodic number, well written lyrics and with an intensity few bands share. By todays standard this song is a winner, but compared to the rest of the Mouthpiece oeuvre it doesn't quite stand out. Left Of You is an instant classic though. It's probably my favourite

Mouthpiece lyric so far. The first lines "what it means and what it meant, nothing's changed in me..." is delivered with such vigor, conviction and persuasion that it stands out as nothing less than a last will, a statement of purpose fulfilling the promise screamed out on the early song Still from the first 7":

I'm still here, and  
now you're gone  
say I'm not cool  
because my feelings  
are too strong

Then five years down the line, when one from most bands has come to expect a more or less disinterested attitude downplaying the youthful commitment, the following words are shouted upon the pounding rhythms of Jason Jammer and steady crunch of Chris Schuster:

I'll take this with  
me till there's  
nothing left of me.  
you cant turn this  
around, you can't  
keep me down  
and when you're gone,  
I'll move on, I will  
continue.  
I am what's left of  
you.

Mouthpiece is definetly what's left of the heyday of hardcore and even when they're gone theirs will be a legacy that won't wither away easily in the hearts of those who "haven't forgotten what hardcore is really about".

Peter Amdam

mouthpiece

mouthpiece



FACE TOMORROW

FACE TOMORROW



Covers and labels for the mailorder(right) and tour(left) editions of the Face Tomorrow 7".



**MOUTHPIECE "Abandon" on  
Consequence Records comp.  
12" "It's for Life"**

The long wait between the first Mouthpiece 7" and the debut album was somewhat eased by this compilation track which is, needless to say, the standout on this record. To this day I think that the layout on their page in the booklet best captures my graphich idea of Mouthpiece. The serenity of it all brings to mind Chain with their "dye me clean" appearance as one Flipside reviewer once mockingly wrote. But to me,

being mocked by someone who has Pearl Jam or the Levellers as fashion icons is more of a compliment than anything else. Abandon is a fast song with some cool 2nd guitar lines, that is something different but not at all overdone. The guitar work is also complete with pick-slides, solid build-ups and everything. The mosh part is one of those crawling (if you can imagine a mosh pit) intermezzos, with no vocals like Bold used to do it, and it ends up in a last breathtaking fast part. And as often is the case with

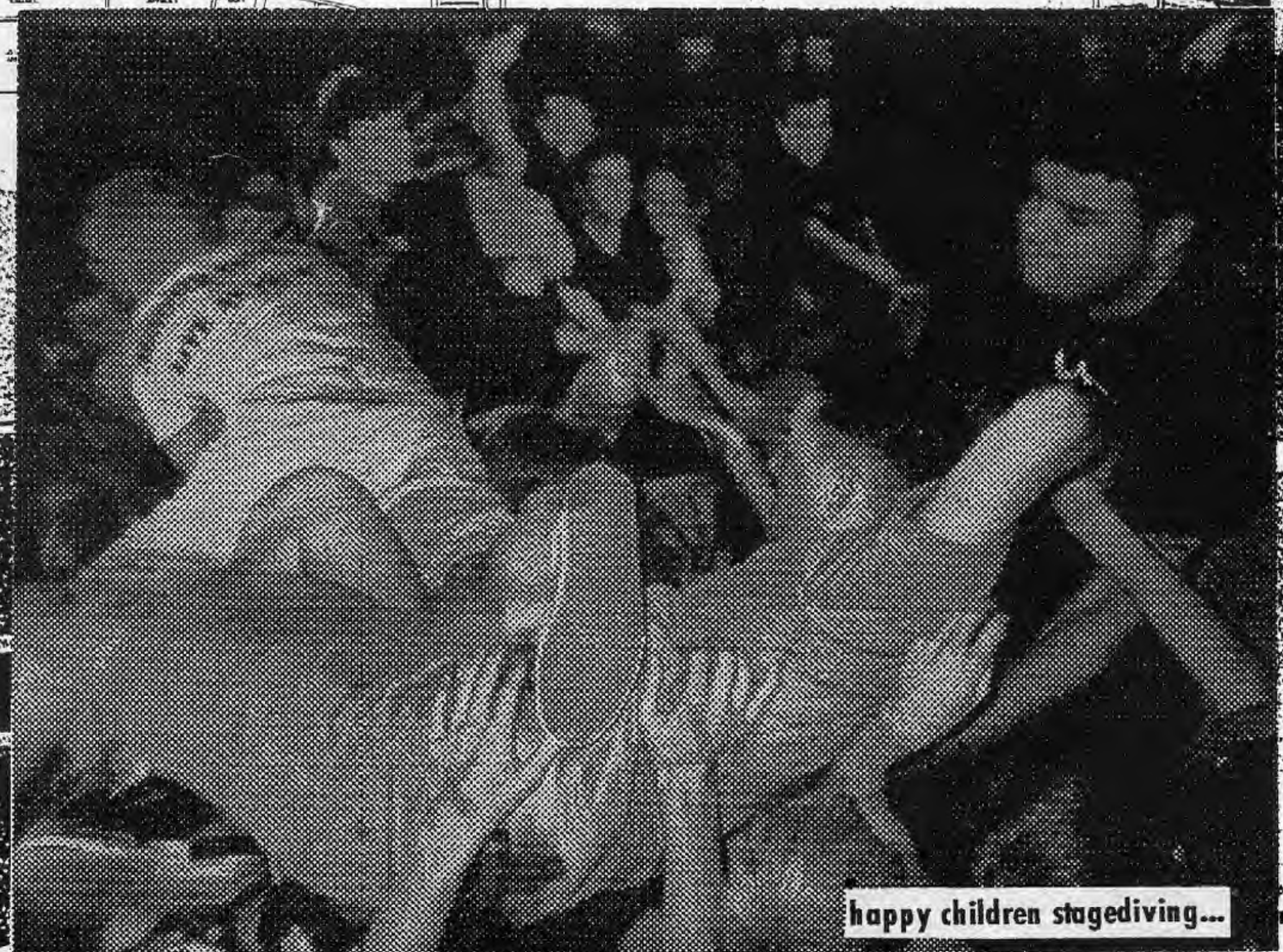
Tims lyrics, Abandons last words begs for a rebuilding and a restrengthening to take place- "I've got to get away". All in all this compilation track strengthened Mouthpiece's position as purveyors of straight edge cool. The song was later re-recorded for their lp and this song along with its line up changes anticipates the album that was recorded almost 2 years later. As far as I know this record is now long out of print.

Peter Amdam

**MOUTHPIECE "What Was Said"  
LP**

I don't know why straight edge kids today complain about Mouthpiece. Has the edge gone dull? Gimme a break, listening to Earth Crisis is as lame as drinking a beer. Mouthpiece is playing hardcore along the lines of a band like Youth Of Today. Mouthpiece does of course have a sound of their own but you can hear their influences like Chain and Gorilla Biscuits. The title song What Was Said reminds me a little bit of Inside Out. This song is supposedly about Earth Crisis and their "vegan revolution", but then again, you never know, it can also have a broader interpretation. What Remains is an incredible song that starts with a fast part and picks up speed towards the end. Sincerity is the theme for this song. Nothing There is about inflated egos. Hold Back is a re-recorded version of their song on the "Words To Live By..." compilation ep. The message of this song is that it is sometimes better to talk things out before using violence-but only sometimes if you ask me!(Hey, calm down tough guy.-ed.). Column is a very short song which I like a lot. It deals with barriers, sort of. Again is about losing friends. Gauge is written in an abstract way. One line goes "your life lies in your hands, dismantle this machine". A possible interpretation of this line could be that each single individual has a responsibility in society. Abandon, another re-recorded song, has a "stabbed in the back" theme to it. Strip the Threads is an emo-ish song that is against sexism and it's written in an abstract way. The 12" is recorded at Why Me?(who else) studios and the production and packaging is incredible. Esp. the front cover looks beautiful. In comparision to Strife Mouthpiece is more pure, and thus better regaining the spirit of true hardcore. This makes Mouthpiece easily the winner of the new breed of old style hardcore bands. New Jerseys pride!!!

Peter Hoeren



happy children stagediving...



MOUTHPIECE "Hold Back" on  
New Age Records comp. 7"  
"Words To Live By... Words  
to Die for"

The first time I heard of Mouthpiece was when I got a letter together with Solid Foundation zine from a guy named Peter Reilly around Christmas time 1990, he mentioned his old band Mouthpiece. As this fanzine was a cool one to say the least, the band name stuck. I saw the name around a few more times, always in a very straight edge connection, but I didn't get to hear it until a year later. I visited Peter Hoeren in Germany, I remember sitting in his room looking through fanzines and records. I was flipping through the second issue of Indecision and Peter shows me this New Age

compilation he just got. We had already talked about it(the Mouthpiece cut) beforehand and I knew I was a fan even though I hadn't even heard the band. The images from their interview in Indecision and their page in the "Words To Live By" comp. made an impression on me that still is here. The clean looking logos, the impeccable straight edge dress sense exposed was fresh sight for sore eyes(at that time there was almost no real sxe bands around). It seemed like this band embodied the sense of hardcore that I was and still am attracted to. To underline it the dedication on their page reads:

AN EXTRA SPECIAL  
THANK TO THOSE WHO  
STILL PURSUE THE  
CLEANEST, MOST

RIGHTEOUS FORM OF  
LIFE KNOWN TO MAN...  
STRAIGHTxEDGE.

This was it. A band totally outspoken about straight edge, they looked the part and they definitely sounded the part. The fast music, the fiercing synchronized guitar- drum chugga- chugga effect that was soon to be a trademark for their style of hardcore. The "formularic" structure of the song; fast part- mosh part- fast part also got me going. At a time when grunge just had begun to infest the hardcore scene with ridiculous ideas of so called "authencity" Mouthpiece was a band not at all ashamed of their roots. Solid hardcore. A solid foundation, indeed.

Peter Amdam

MOUTHPIECE s/t 7"

Man, I have so much respect for this band. What Youth Of Today was doing in the 80s, Mouthpiece is doing in the 90s. The music is simple with plenty of both fast parts and mosh parts.

Sheer energy reminiscent of Chain Of Strength with personal and intellegent lyrics to boot. I guess Can We Win is about relationships and I think everyone can get something out of this song. Still is about holding true. Distracted deals in some

ways with keeping up with reality and Frame is about people wasting their lives on drugs and alcohol. Note: the repressing has differen- backcovers, inserts and labels. Hunt down for both pressings if you are a diehard fan.

Peter Hoeren



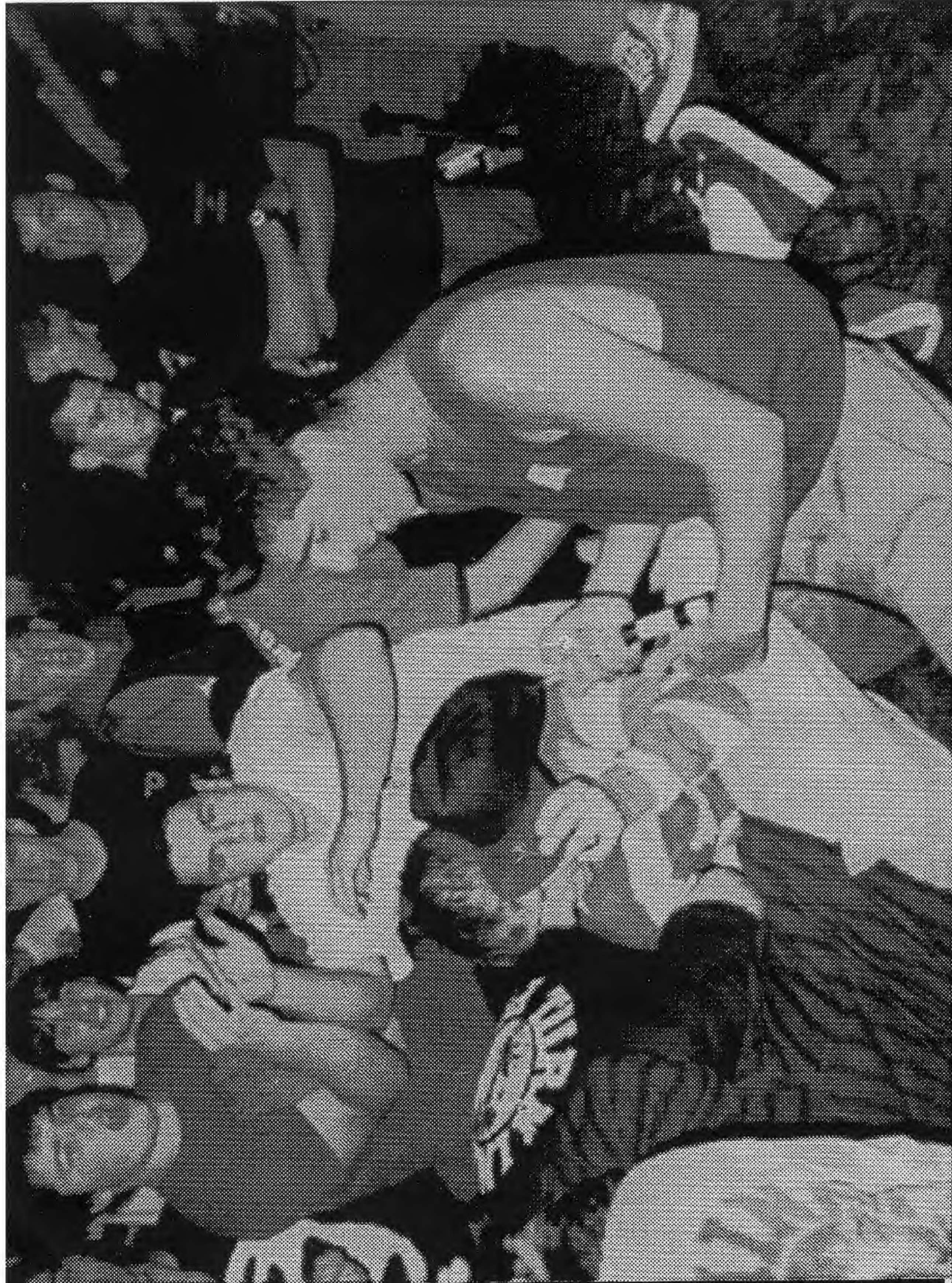


IMPACT.  
I CAN'T BELIEVE  
ANOTHER YEAR HAS  
GONE BY, AND STILL  
NOTHING, AS IF WE  
DONT EVEN TRY AND  
THERES NOTHING TO  
BE PROUD OF AND  
NOTHING YOU CAN  
TRULY STAND BY.

ITS TIME TO  
BELIEVE IVE GOT  
SOMETHING TO SAY  
AND I CANT SAVE  
THOSE THOUGHTS  
FOREVER I WANT TO  
SEE A CHANGE BUT  
YOU DONT FEEL A  
THING I COVER UP  
YOUR WORDS, SO  
NICELY SAID JUST  
TO MAKE YOU SOUND

GOOD. I WANT TO  
BELIEVE OH, SURE  
PEOPLE FUCKING

BUY IT, BUT  
NOTHING IS  
STANDING UP TO  
TIME AND IF YOU  
REALLY WANT TO  
SAY SOMETHING,  
WERE WE EVER  
REALLY SAYING  
SOMETHING.



# CHAIN OF STRENGTH

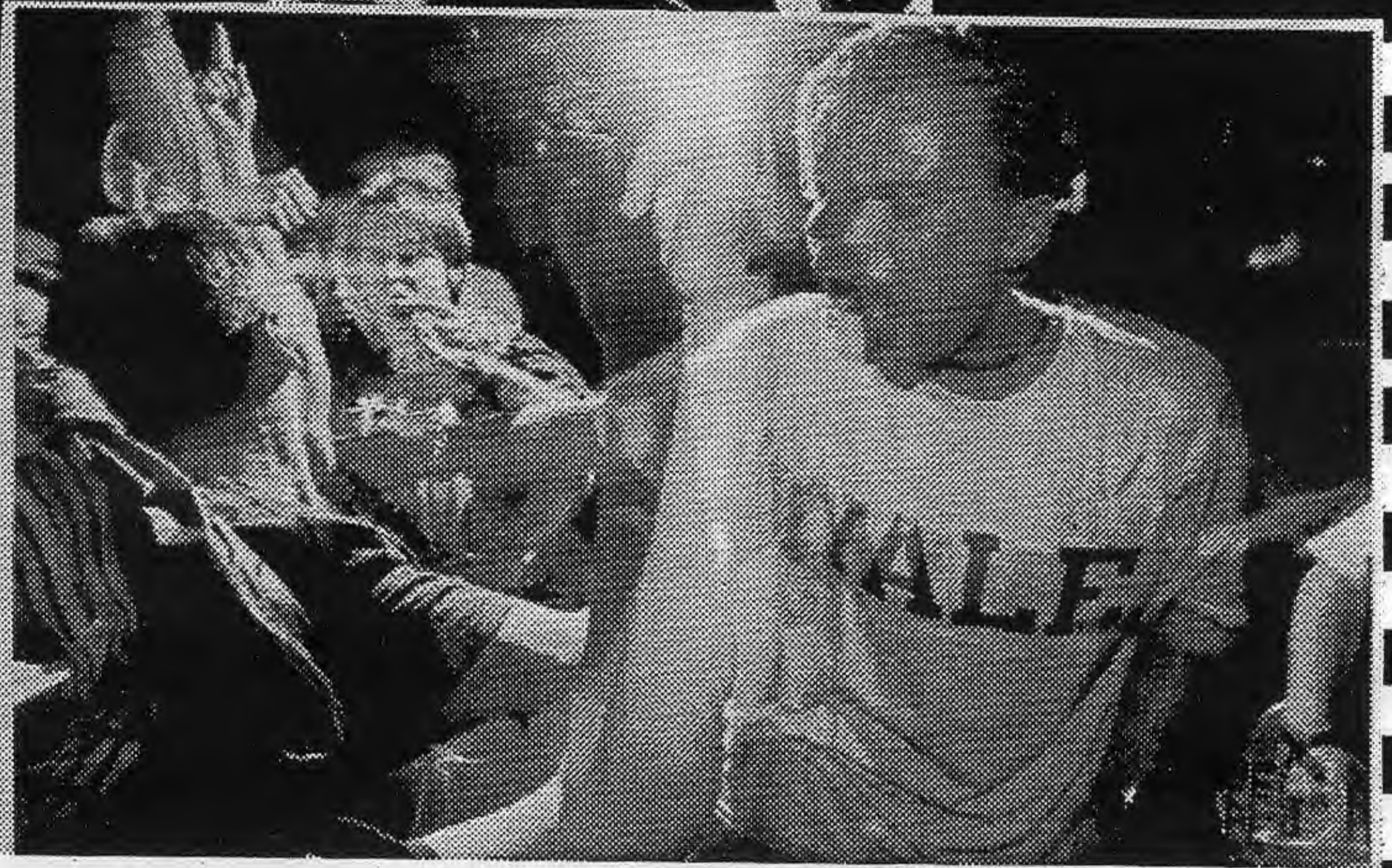




# SPORTSWEAR

ARROGANT STRAIGHT EDGE

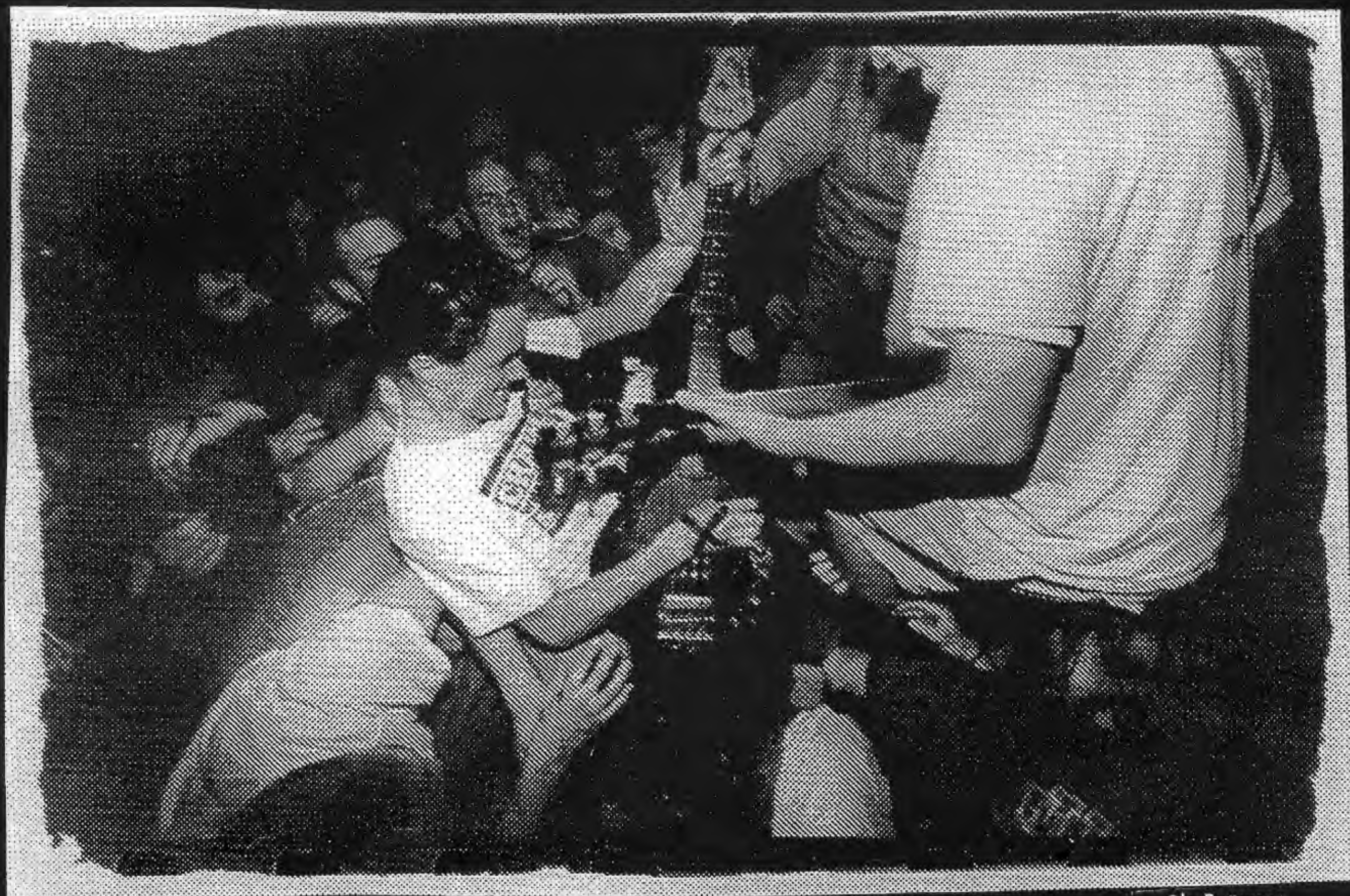
p: Ole Petterson







# ONWARD



p: Ole Petterson



# WIDE AWAKE

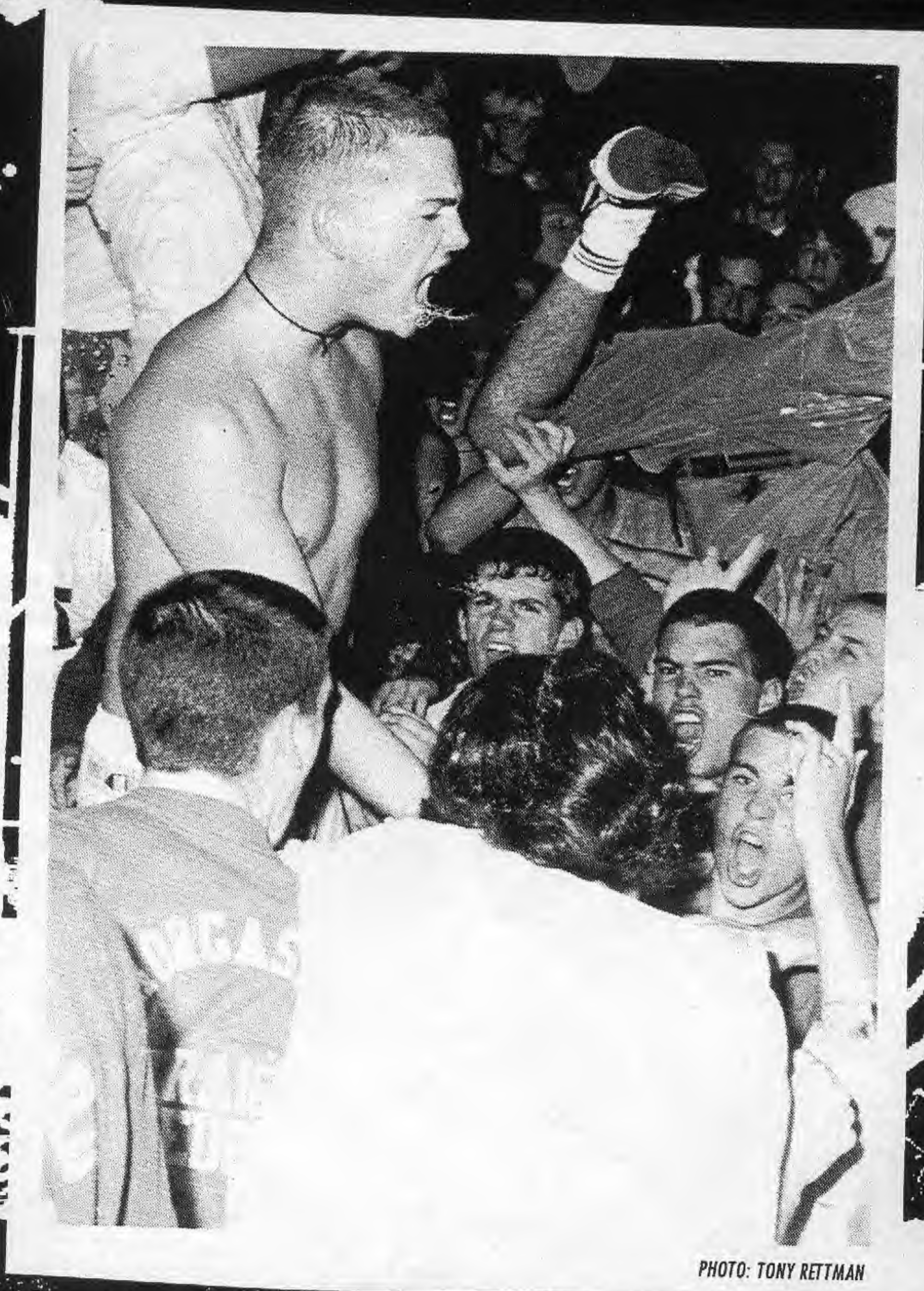


PHOTO: TONY RETTMAN

CAN TURN MY BACK - DON'T NEED TO FIGHT  
MY EDGE ON HIM - IS MY INSIGHT



## WHAT REMAINS...

Tiny particles of black ink, resembling spots or dots, almost completely hidden by skin. One has to look closer, lean towards the hand to see it. The remnants of an X written, marked, on the back of a hand. This ink, it amounts to next to nothing... nothing, only visible to the more attentive gaze. Gazing into... nothing. As this very X is the repeated and close attention to... nothing. It's a cross, chi- asmus, it's a crossing over and at the same time a crossing out, a reversal and a prohibition. Crossing out something, or maybe nothing- the mark of an abstinence, an absence. Something that is not there anymore, it's only the memory of what never was there. A memorization, a remembering to... to forget.



These *points* hidden in the pores of the skin, traces in a skin. Traces resisting what is not to come, yet at the same time anticipating what is to come. Another mark, another repetition, another X. Another X affirming a promise of what is to come, a further negation of what is not to come. Affirming negation. Waiting. Awaiting what is to come, *namely* nothing, or rather a repeated negation. Waiting... *points de suspension*... the three dots marking the graphic wait, catching breath, marked silence<sup>1</sup>. A striking similarity again with the black dots in the pores of the skin, an X and then [...].

X, the unknown, unnamable, followed by anticipation, suspension, fading and increasing effort in the repeated close attention to nothing. Crossing over into nothing. The X is the inversion, turning around, the turning point. It's a crossing over by crossing out. Yet crossing over into something else, the forbidden place. When the Teen Idles somewhere in California walk underaged into the club, the prohibited space, the X as the mark of the contraband. Smuggling the contraband. The mark allowing, and at the same time prohibiting, entrance into the known, and at the same time unknown. Then the crossing of a continent, again crossing borders, again to mark the crossing over, the crossing out. To apply the mark of crossing out, crossing over. What remains of this singular event? Nothing, the actual crossing over is still unknown, the riddle of the X is not solved, and can't be solved. Yet, this singular event is inscribed in every repetition of the mark. These singular events are repeated, again, the crossing over, stepping into something- nothing. An inversion, a movement of the head, turning back, looking back/ forward. Is this, in the blink of an eye, a gaze into the "other night" Maurice Blanchot writes about, where "when everything has disappeared in the night, 'everything has disappeared' appears? This is the *other* night."<sup>2</sup> An invisible inscription of a past not known, repeating itself in the promise of a future, not known. Again like the three dots in writing, marking the pause, a gathering of thoughts yet at the same time, a dispersion, a fragmentation as is obvious from the very graphic form. This *point* of waiting, dispersion *and* gathering, *pointing* towards what is about to come, or doesn't come. Where writing ends itself. Followed by the unknown, the X. The X. The X.

Yet another encounter with the material mark of precisely nothing. The signifier signifying the nothingness of its own process of signification. The figure of non- sense. What is lacking sense, substance, no experience, the nothing of experience. Yet this very materiality, the X by the felt tipped marker. And the resisting of its own effacing, the remains, the dots of ink hiding in the pores of the skin, in the page of paper. An invisible resisting, invisible writing, writing non- sense, lack of meaning. Andrzej Warminski writes of this materiality: "the possibility of putting figures, words, markers, X's, in the place of a lack of meaning, putting something to see and to know where there is nothing to see or know- insofar as it is always possible... insofar as all figures transfers or substitutes the subject to it- is a non-sense or a nothing that is the material condition of all sense and figure."<sup>3</sup> So there is an uncanny connection between the materiality and the resistance of the signifier, of *écriture*, of allegory, and this X on the back of a hand. The X as a marker of the unknown, the uninteresting, the boring and the plain. Yet it *has* to make sense, it the condition of sense. And still it's a haunting riddle. A riddling X. And as a riddle, in essence impossible to solve. Yet this: "non- sense" as "the material condition of all sense and figure."

There is a certain eeriness we have encountered here, this other night, this disappearance, nothingness, remains, remnants. And what about the remnants. Isn't there another association that is even more eerie here that we have tried to circumscribe. Isn't there death involved here. Ashes to ashes, and the these tiny particles of ink, these dots hidden in the skin as the three points in writing marking suspension and a possible transgression of a limit, don't the dots have a strange resemblance to the black dust known as ashes? What is burned, what bridges are burned? The flame still burns. And coming back...

Peter Amdam(summer 1996)

<sup>1</sup> I am here of course referring to the grammatical use of the three dots- ...- in writing.

<sup>2</sup> Maurice Blanchot *The Space of Literature* p.163, trans. Ann Smock, University of Nebraska Press 1982. Originally published as *L'Espace Littéraire* in France 1955

<sup>3</sup> Andrzej Warminski *Readings in Interpretation. Hölderlin, Hegel, Heidegger*. University of Minnesota Press. Minneapolis 1987.p. xl.



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